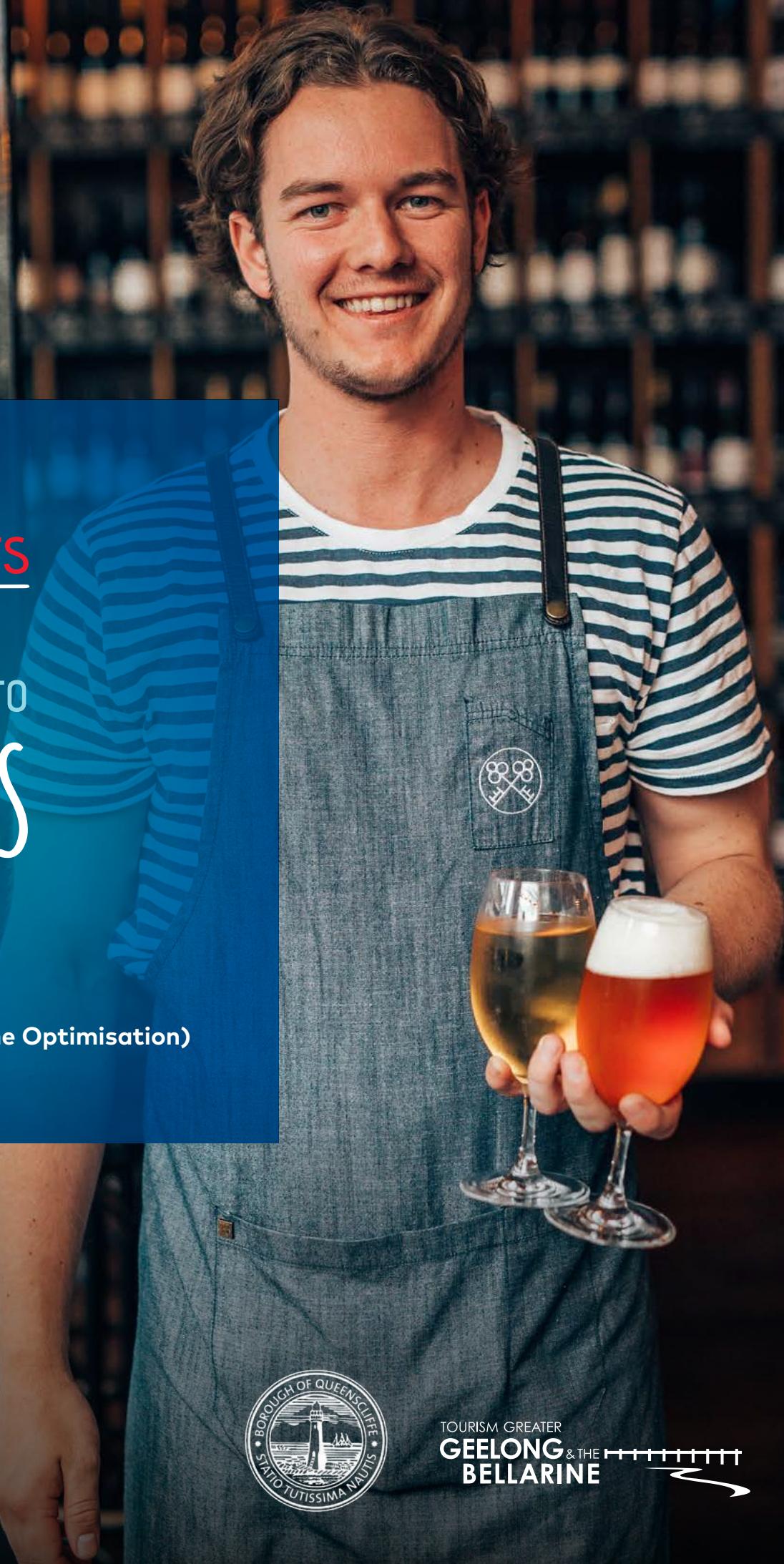


TOOLKITS

A GUIDE TO NO BS SEO

(Search Engine Optimisation)



TOURISM GREATER
GEELONG & THE BELLARINE

TOPICS

- > **What is Content**
- > **What is a Backlink**
- > **SEO Elements**
- > **A guide to Website Optimisation**
- > **SEO Checklist**

THIS GUIDE IS FOR YOU

If you want an easy to follow, practical guide to improving your presence on Google.

WHAT IS SEO?

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimisation and it's basically just a process to bring your website and online activity in line with Google's "best practice".

These days SEO is really all about Content and Backlinks. If you take nothing else away from this toolkit but this, you're still miles ahead.

WHAT IS CONTENT?

Content is simply the words, images and video on your website.

WHAT IS A BACKLINK?

Wherever another website links to your site.

A well optimised site that has a number of backlinks tells Google that you have authority in the industry you're in and Google will be more likely to rank you in the top 3.

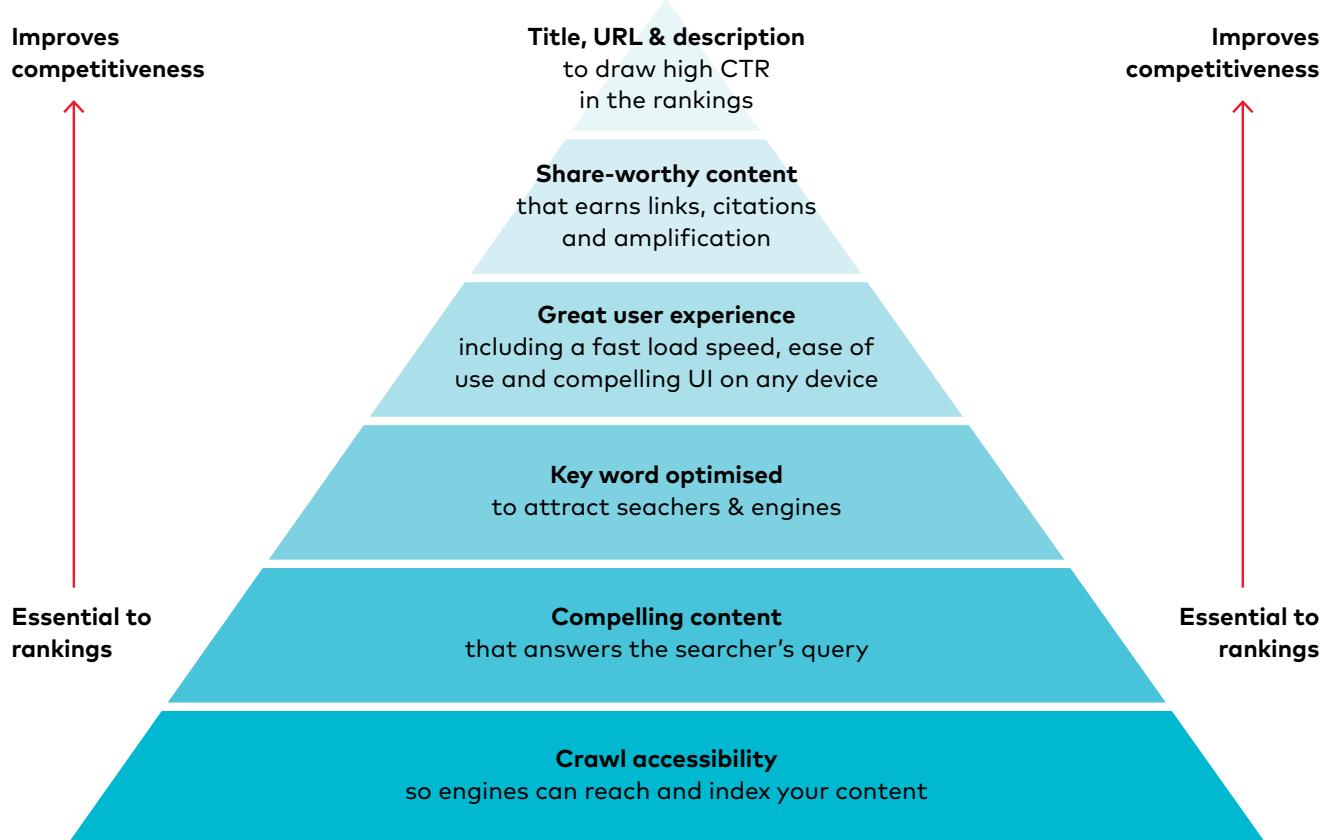
SEO ELEMENTS

There are many SEO elements with varying degrees of influence on search ranking positions.

During this guide we'll focus on content ad backlinks but we'll also take you through:

- Crawl Accessibility - Are your web pages visibility to Google or are there page errors or conflicts
- Content - Is your content helpful, accurate and trustworthy
- Keywords - Does your website content use keywords to accurately describe your product or service
- User experience - A fast loading site that's easy to use across any device
- Share Worthy - Content that others link to or post about
- Title URL and Descriptions - Adding descriptive meta titles and descriptions. We'll explain more about this

MOZLOW'S HIERARCHY OF SEO NEEDS



A GUIDE TO WEBSITE OPTIMISATION

Website content needs to be keyword rich so that Google can understand more about your service offering and exactly who it might be relevant for. There is no way Google will rank you for a certain keyword if you're not using it across your website content.

Where to start with SEO:

1. Keyword Research

Develop a list of keywords that are high value to your business. Start a spreadsheet and come up with as many combinations as you can. There isn't much point optimising your website towards a keyword that no-one searches for so you'll need to do some further research to see which of those terms are most searched for.

Keyword Surfer - A free Google Chrome Extension will help you understand search volumes

[Keyword Surfer](#)

SEO Moz - A great tool to help with many aspects of SEO including Keyword Research. Moz can also help you with your keyword research and also get a benchmark for your current search rankings. This is a great starting point to see if your SEO efforts are paying off.

[SEO Moz](#)

2. Crawl Accessibility

If Google can't access or crawl your website or if it's flagging your pages as having errors, it can dramatically affect your search rankings. The easiest way to manage your search relationship with Google is to get your website setup for a tool called Google Search Console.

You can use the Search Console to find out things like how many people are accessing your site and how they are finding it, also things like which devices they're using more often. It can also help you find and fix website errors, submit a sitemap, and create and check your permissions on how Google can access your site through a robots.txt file.

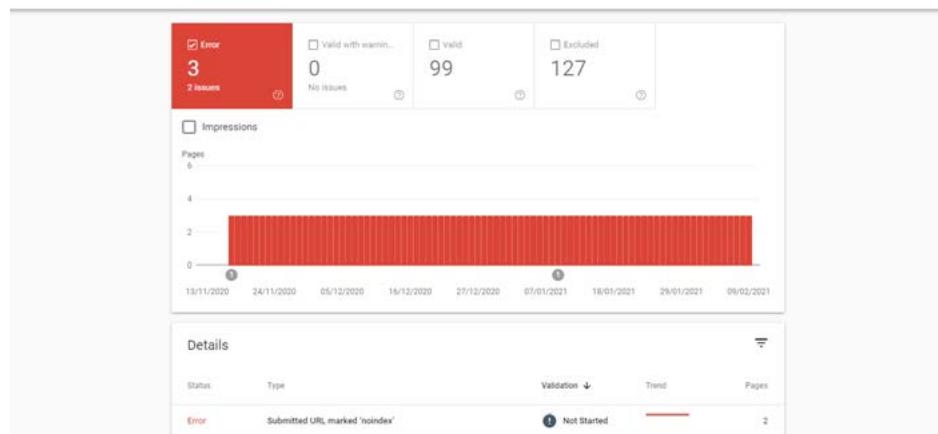
You can find out more about Search Console here:

[Search Console](#)

Once setup - look at the coverage report:

Things to look out for:

- 404 errors: This is where Google can't crawl your site. It's best to work to fix any broken pages. Sometimes these result from pages being deleted and can be redirected to other relevant pages.
- 5XX errors: Server errors. This could be due to a range of issues, such as - code bugs when running updates has gone wrong.



3. Website Content and Keywords

Website content should give individuals the information they're looking for. It's all about identifying what problem you're trying to solve.

Revisit the keyword list you created and choose 5-10 keywords as your main targets. Try to structure these into the page content, metadata and headings.

Content Tips:

- Avoid short content and try to explain things clearly and with enough detail
- Use clear headlines and ideally using H1 metatags and H2 metatags
- Use imagery

4. User Experience

Can your customers find what they're looking for?

Improving website user experience is basically the process helping individuals find what they're looking for.

Tips to improve user experience:

- Understand your target audience and their needs/ demands
- Make buttons or calls to action stand out (use bright or contrasting colours)
- Think about user flow and guiding individuals through a story or logical process

Other things to consider:

- Website Speed. Review your speed using Google's page speed insights tool: [Website Speed](#)
- Consider optimising for site speed. If you're using Wordpress like many small businesses are you can install plugins like Smush or WP Optimise to improve page load speeds

5. Backlinks

Whenever someone links to your website it creates a backlink. Google can see the network of other sites linking to you. The more sites and ideally ones with credibility, gives Google a signal that you are an authority in the space you work in. Most businesses have this happen naturally with sponsorships or other businesses linking to their content, but you can also spend time and build out your linking network.

Google My Business is the first place to start. If you don't already have a profile, then create one. If you do, make sure you add images, video, details of events or products and that you are updating these regularly. It is a good idea to ask your customers for reviews as well, as these Backlinks will be added to your Google My Business account.

Other worthy links to build Backlinks:

[Aussie Web](#)

[Bing Places](#)

[Yellow Pages](#)

[True Local](#)

[Hotfrog](#)

[Local Business Guide](#)

[Yelp](#)

[Dlook](#)



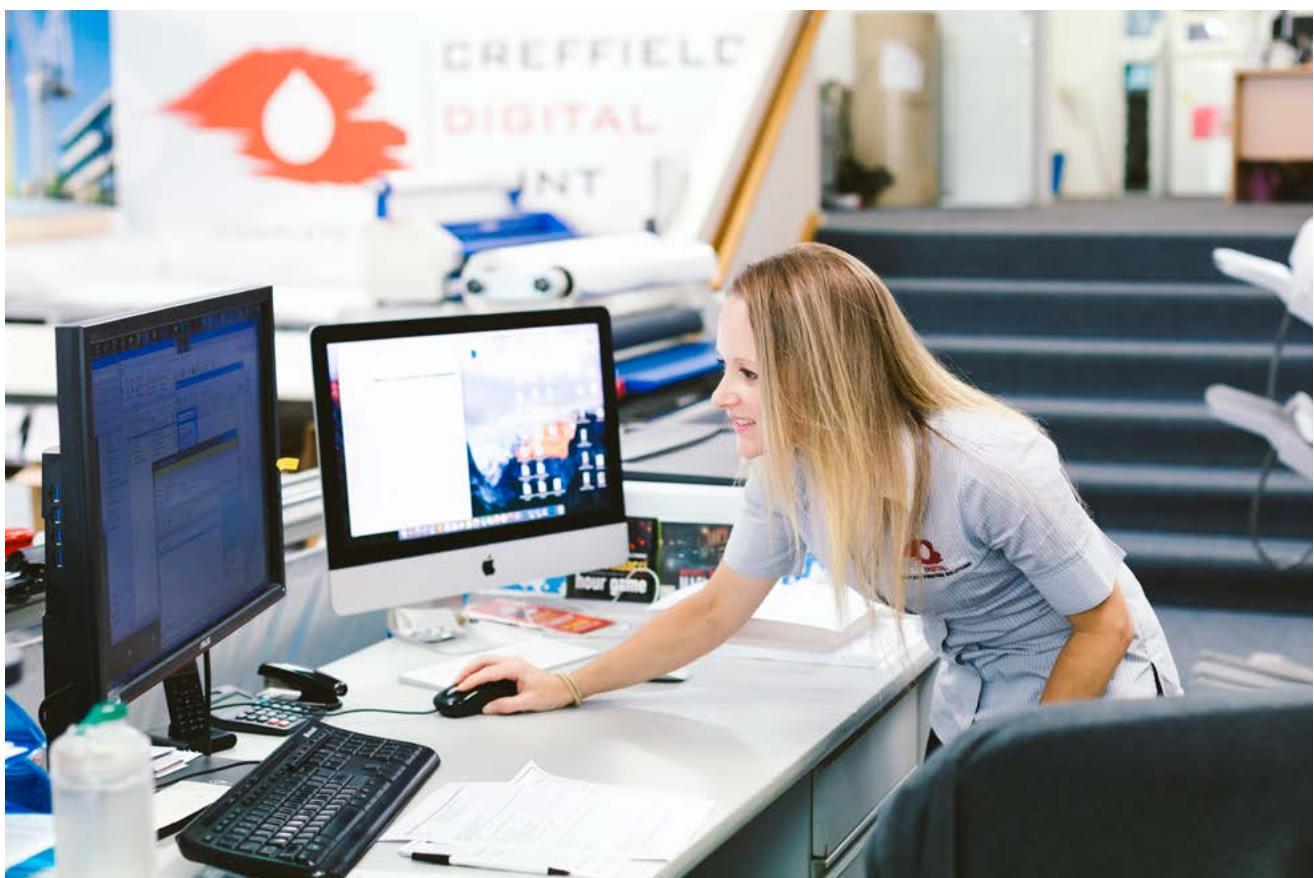
Wrap up:

SEO can seem overwhelming and really technical but if you follow this guide and invest the time and work on your Search Optimisation you will see results. Remember that SEO is a process, anyone can do it but you need to keep at it. Don't just optimise the site and think that you're done. Keep it going! :)

Another great tool is:

[Ubersuggest](#)

Ubersuggest is a free tool used by many small businesses to understand key word research and get actionable insights, content ideas and information about backlink opportunities.



SEO CHECKLIST:

Type	Tactic	Overview	Tools and Notes	When
On site	Site Speed	<p>Ideally want it below 2 seconds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Browser caching - Page size - Query strings from static resources - Minify CSS, javascript, HTML - Server response time - Above fold content rendering 	<p>Check speed here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pingdom - Page Speed Insights (priorities mobile results) <p>WordPress plugins to optimise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - W3 Total Cache (basic video tutorial) - Autoptimize - Smush (image compressions) - WP-Rocket (paid optimisation plugin) <p>- Note: Can be limited by clients set up eg. Large files, heavy coding, theme, platform and hosting</p>	Fix first, instant impact
On site	Site Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4xx: redirects, robot txt - Duplicate content: canonical tags, - H1: add one per page, must include primary keyword - Meta data: Individual title and descriptions (doc to setup), consider intent, include a call to action. Eg. Book now. - URL length - SSL Certificate 	<p>Check problems here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moz Site Crawler <p>WordPress plugins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Redirection (301 redirects) - Yoast (meta data) - To code H1 surround like this <code><h1> heading here </h1></code> - SSL: Let's Encrypt free version, use depends on host - If you update URLs, create redirects <p>Joomla extensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aimy Canonical (Canonical Tags) - Inbuilt meta and redirection set up - Note: Joomla makes multiple copies of content based on where it is used. Eg. Main menu vs footer menu, same page different links. 	Fix first, Instant impact

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SEO Checklist:

Type	Tactic	Overview	Tools and Notes	When
On site	Mobile Optimised and User Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Test mobile experience - Test desktop experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is everything responsive, easy to navigate, sizing etc - Try and achieve what the user would, Eg. Go through looking and checking out a product. - Obvious next action, one primary key action per page 	Review at start, priorities updates depending on impact
On site	Keywords	Identify primary keyword and 2-3 secondary keywords per page, consider intent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Google Ads keyword planner - Moz Explorer - Chrome plugin: Keywords Everywhere or Keyword Surfer 	Need to action research early but will take time to have an impact. Revisit every 6-9 months
On site	Page Content	Optimise content for readability, with keywords and considering intent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On pages see how well keywords appear with moz bar - Search Google using your keywords and see what it thinks is the most relevant content to answering that query - Make the next action easy to make, Eg. On page form. 	Priorities content based on clients focus
On site	Schema markup	Add code or a plugin. Schema markup helps Google understand the page quickly. Also helps add rich snippets, Eg. Reviews in organic results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check current setup: Structured Data Testing based on individual page) - Create code with Schema Markup Generator - Types to consider: Website, local business/ organisation, product/event mark-up (depends on business) - Use rich snippets for products, events, blogs etc 	Most important for e-commerce websites
On site	Site structure		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean up sitemap (published pages which shouldn't be published, structure etc.) - Access site map - Yoast - url.com.au/sitemap_index.xml (may or may not work) - Submit and resubmit sitemap with Google Console 	Depends what quality it is in

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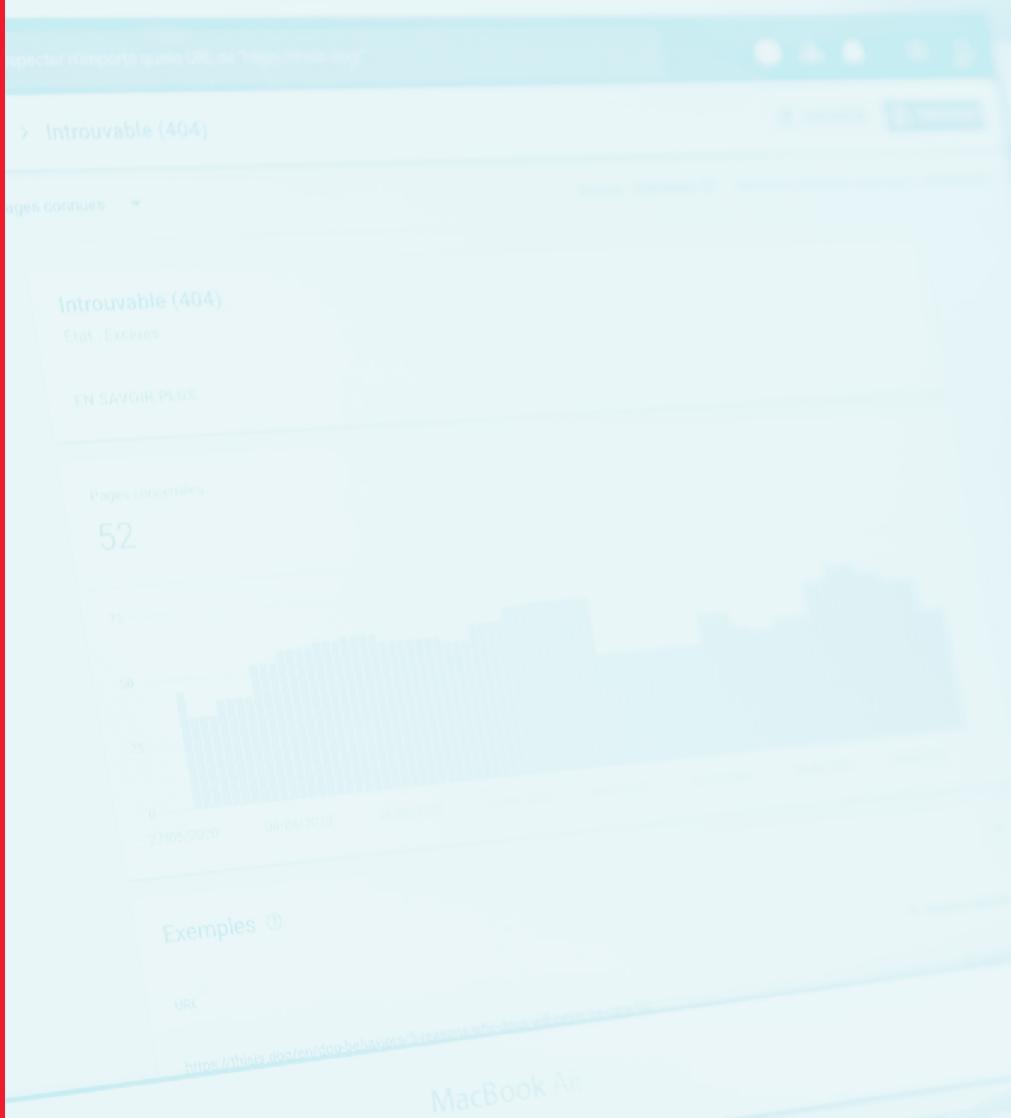
SEO Checklist:

Type	Tactic	Overview	Tools and Notes	When
On site	Content Creation	Create compelling content people will share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Answer a question - Be around keywords trying to increase ranking for - Include schema mark-up on blogs 	Ongoing (depends on plan)
Off site	Backlinking	Increase links to the site. Preferable links without no follow protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audit competitors for backlink opportunities - Local/ industry directories - Partners, suppliers, distributors, sports clubs, charities etc. - Trialling: being a thought leader on Quora and industry forums - Outsource link building 	Ongoing (depends on plan)
Off site	Google My Business Listing	<p>Optimised with details, its important the business function is correct.</p> <p>Treat Google My Business like a social media platform and post photo's, events, updates and if relevant, products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Details - Category is correct Eg. Home builder vs Carpenter - Add services with descriptions and prices - Encourage client to ask for more reviews 	Depends what quality it is in

Learn more about SEO:

[Introduction to SEO Tactics](#)

[SEO Fundamentals](#)



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